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the world; soon hour for the knock-off shift. And Sam Gallagher propped his shoulders against the white wall of the deckhouse on the diver's barge. His open lunch box, empty now, lay on his lap; a cigarette smoldered in his hand.

"It's close to whistle time," Brownie said.

Sam forced a grin. "That again."

And he turned to look down the long line of shipways. Each was a slanting deck, running from far inshore to far out in the river. Each was supported by piling and each —— He frowned then. Piling. Sure! The deck of each shipway was a slanting floor. Below it ——

"Brownie," he said, "I'm going ashore."

"Have at it," Brownie said.

Sam fed the skiff to a passing sonk deep in the plank at the water's edge. A hundred feet from the water, he ducked down between the bents of a whirly trestle and crouched there. Directly ahead of him was a small opening—a narrow aisle between the rows of piling that supported the plank of the shipway deck. Sam Gallagher turned to peer in the opposite direction. There, again, he found an opening. He rolled aside an empty carbide can and went that way, squeezing into the narrow hole, crawling into the dark. Dimly, he heard the distant howling of a whistle.

He had gone perhaps a hundred feet before he stopped. Other discarded cans lay around him here, vague shapes in the dark. Turning, Sam retraced his steps, moving slowly, stunned by the enormity of his discovery. A man could crawl under the shipway—under all the shipways!

Sam Gallagher was under the trestle again, brushing sand and mud from his clothes, when booted feet hit the plank above him, when a big voice bellowed, "Gallagher! Come out in there!"

Sam Gallagher said, "Coming up."

He went up a brace to reach the dark. He found Kelly waiting for him—a shaggy red bear of a man with a cocky slant of grin, with his thumbs hooked in his belt and his shirt open to the waist. A grinning Kelly, with a wicked roll to his head and a wicked shine in his eyes.

"So now you're deaf?" he said.

"No," said Sam. "I'm not."

"Then you're hidin' out. You heard the whistle an' crawled down there out of sight." Kelly pursed his lips and spat. "I ought to fire yuh for that. I ought to kick your teeth in for doggin' it."

"Try," Sam told him.

Kelly's grin widened. "I got a quart that says I can."

"That," said Sam, "is a bet!"

He tried for the grin and missed. Kelly ducked a bit, rolling his head, and Sam's long left hook scraped his cheek. But Kelly was off balance, pawing the air, and the gate was wide open. Sam Gallagher went in hard and fast. He got Kelly twice up under the midbreast, and saw Kelly's eyes go wide. He threw his right hand at Kelly's chin. And Kelly was down, flat on the seat of his pants, with surprise on his face.

"You do better with water wings," Sam taunted.

Kelly yelled, "I'll bust you in two!"

He got up, scrambling up in his panting rush. He came wading in, reaching for Sam Gallagher with those whistling hooks. Sam faded and drifted and moved away. He put the long left in Kelly's face and kept it there. Now and then he stepped in close to bring the right up, short and hard. Then he was away again, safe behind the stabbing left again, waiting. Waiting for Kelly's Sunday punch.

There was blood on Kelly's nose and blood on his mouth. His eyes were wild and white. He came on, growling. "Fight! Stop runnin'!" He threw a hook that scraped Sam's ribs. Another that split the flesh of Sam's cheek. He moved his feet and set himself. And then the Sunday punch came down. Now, Sam thought. Step back. Sway a little and Kelly will tie himself in a knot. He'll hit the ground with that punch. And here it is—a open shot at Kelly's chin—and Kelly beat over like a derrick on a ship's mast.

The jolting shock of that blow was a blaze of pain in Sam's wrist, his forearm, his shoulder. And the sound of it was the sound of a meat ax in a butcher's block. Kelly's hands were limp at his sides. He took a stumbling half step, then pitched forward on his face.

"Kelly, boy," Sam panted, "that squares us!"

Quitting time. Sam Gallagher joined the crowd at the gate. There was a patch of white tape on his cheek; his right hand was puffed and swollen. But he had a grin for the guard as he shouldered past, a grin for the whole wide world. And then he met Kelly.

"I been waitin' for yuh," Kelly said.

Sam Gallagher's grin froze. "Why?"

"I pay my bills. I quit a little early, see? I got me to a store an' I buy this."

He thrust a package at Sam, a round package about a foot in length. It was smooth to the touch beneath its wrapping. A bottle. A quart bottle.

"What's this?" Sam asked.

Embarrassed, Kelly said, "I told yuh I had a quart that said I could beat your ears off. That's a bet, see? Turns out I lose." A red flush crept up Kelly's neck; he swallowed. "I pay my bills. That's your quart."

Sam Gallagher lofted the package awkwardly. Four hours ago, Kelly had charged him with both hands swinging and murder in his heart. Now, red-faced and fumbling, he was saying, in the only way he knew, he held no grudge. There was a word for a man like that. A kicked-around word that has little place in the world today. But Kelly found it—redheaded Kelly, with his tough, battered face, calked boots, his open shirt and his barrel chest. Kelly, who'd have a go at anything or any man. Indeed there was a word for him. Shoreman.

"Kelly," Sam said, "you're all right."

"You ain't so bad yourself," Kelly said gruffly. And instantly added, "For a green hand, that is."

Sam Gallagher laughed. He stripped the wrapping from the bottle, twisted the cork free. "Have one?"

"After you," Kelly said.

They had a drink apiece. A big drink. Then Sam looked at the bottle, at the broadly grinning Kelly.

"Have another," he invited.

Kelly said, "Don't care if I do."

It was late evening when Kelly's heavy coupé made a wide and careful swing to reach West Cherry Drive. Kelly's big hands gripped the steering wheel tightly; his face was twisted into a scowl of fierce concentration.

"Am I doin' okay?" he asked.

"Fine," said Sam. "You do fine."

"One eye's the way to do her," Kelly said. "She don't jump around so much if you keep one eye shut."

"Keep her shut then," Sam advised.

He tried that himself, laughing softly. The street still had a tendency to dip and sway, but it was better. Distinctly better. "Second house in the next block," he said, and tipped his head to squint at Kelly. Same man, Kelly. When he hit you, you rattled. Pull a row with him and he wore you down. Match drink for drink with him, and pretty soon organs began to sing in your head and your feet got ideas of their own.

"This the place?" Kelly asked.

"Right," Sam answered. "Come on in."

They went up the walk together, weaving only a little. The front door opened then, and Paul peered out at them, an oddly shy and troubled Paul, whose eyes were enormous in his small face. Sam Gallagher crooked a finger at the boy. Hesitantly, Paul came to his side.

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